

Quick Start Guide



UDDY®

World's Best
Guitar Learning
System



Strumming. Here are a few key points to remember about strumming:

- **Keep the pick perpendicular to the strings.** Beginners tend to tilt the pick up on downstrokes and down on upstrokes to keep the pick from getting caught in the strings. First, a tilted pick tends to slap the string, resulting in a less clear sound. Second, tilting the pick creates unnecessary wrist movements that will be more difficult to keep up as you increase your strumming speed.
- **Strum from the elbow.** The majority of the strumming motion should come from your elbow. Keep your wrist relaxed, but not moving very much.
- **Strum through the strings.** Beginners tend to shorten their strum motion to just barely pass the last string of the strum, resulting in a choppy strum. Making sure you have a good follow through when strumming increases the speed that your pick as it passes over the strings and allows you to strum through the strings. You want to hear all the strings being struck almost simultaneously, in a burst of sound.
- **Keep your strumming arm in constant motion.** By keeping your arm moving in a constant up and down motion, whether or not you are hitting the strings, your arm acts as a metronome, helping you to stay in the rhythm of the song.

Developing a smooth, effective strum takes time – that only comes with practice. The important thing is to not just know how to strum, but learn it well enough so that it becomes second nature.

Now, let's practice these principles by learning the basic strum pattern – the *quarter strum*. The quarter strum is simply strumming all downstrokes, one strum per beat. In a 3/4-time song, this would be three beats per measure. In a 4/4-time song, there would be four beats per measure. But, before we start, let's take a look at how we write strum patterns:

	3/4 –time					4/4-time										
Strum	:	/	/	/	:	:	/	/	/	/	:					
Beats		1	+	2	+	3	+		1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

In the upper line, labeled "Strum," the vertical lines ("|") indicate the beginning and ending of a measure; the colon symbol (":") are repeat signs; and the diagonal lines ("/") indicate where to strum. The lower line, labeled "Beats," count out the beats of the measure. The numbers represent the beats or downstrokes, and the plus signs ("+") represent upbeats or upstrokes. So, when strumming, move your arm down on the numbers and up on the "and's".

In 4/4-time, you would count along by saying "one-and-two-and-three-and-four-and," as you strum; only, make sure you strum the strings on the downstrokes and miss the strings on the upstrokes. When you get to the end of the measure (four beats), the ":" tells you to start over at the beginning of the measure and play the measure once more, without missing a beat.

Strumming Chords. There are four buttons on the Chord Buddy. Each button plays a different chord.

Blue = G chord

Red = D chord

Green = C chord

Yellow = E minor chord

Now, pick up your guitar and let's see what you got!

- Press the blue button on the chord buddy with your pinky finger (P) and strum all six strings of the guitar to play a G chord,
- Press the red button with your ring finger (R) and strum the bottom four strings to play a D chord
- Press the green button with your middle finger (M) and strum the bottom five strings to play a C chord
- Press the yellow button with your index finger and strum all six strings to play an E-minor chord.

Warm-up Exercises

We have outlined a warm-up exercise program below that we recommend you do every time you pick up your guitar through Lesson 6. The exercise is designed to help you work on developing both your right- and left-hand coordination.

It is important to remember that this is not a race to see who can strum the fastest. Start off slow to make sure (1) you are strumming correctly; (2) your transition from one chord to the next is smooth; and (3) your rhythm is consistent throughout the entire exercise. As your coordination improves, you can start to increase the speed.

The first exercise is a simple four beat, basic strum exercise that plays each of the four chords.

Warm-up Exercise 1

G (pinky finger)

| |: / / / /

D (ring finger)

| / / / / |

C (middle finger)

| / / / /

E-minor (index finger)

| / / / / :||

Warm-up Exercise 2 builds on the first exercise. Strum a four-beat measure for the G, D, C, and E-minor chords, and then work your way back down from E-minor to G. Play this through at least twice.

Warm-up Exercise 3 mixes things up a little bit. Strum a four-beat measure for G, then C, then D, and then E-minor, using the designated fingers, and then work your way back down with E-minor, then D, then C, and finish with G. Play this through at least twice.

Practice these everyday until you are comfortable with your ability to strum and change chords, without missing a beat. To add interest and keep challenging yourself, you can reduce the strums to two and, eventually, one strum per chord. You can also change from the basic strum to the pick strum, alternating pick strum, and pop strum (which we will learn later).

Let's Play Tom Dooley – A two-chord song

About the Song—*Tom Dooley* is an old Appalachian folk song based on the grisly murder of a woman named Laura Foster by an impoverished Confederate soldier named Tom Dula (pronounced Dooley). The murder made headlines across the newly restored country, due in part to the graphic nature of the crime, but, also, because Tom and Laura were lovers. For his crimes, Tom Dula was convicted and sentenced to death by hanging. He was executed May 1st, 1868.

Required Chords—This song uses the G chord (blue button) and the D Chord (red button).

Strum—The diagonal lines (slashes) are the strum marks. The bold marks should be strummed a little louder than the others. Notice that the strum marks are divided into groups of four by vertical lines. This song is in 4/4 time. Practice strumming and changing the chords as indicated (without singing).

Sing & Strum *Tom Dooley* and change chords as indicated. It may help you to first play along with the video or just watch the video again. You may choose to say the words, sing them, or anything in between. Just have fun. Be a little silly if you wish. Feel the music.

Tom Dooley

2-Chord Song

/ = Louder Strum

/ = Softer Strum

Guitar

G (blue)

G (blue)

Hang down your head Tom Doo - ley.

G (blue)

D (red)

Hang down your head and cry.

D (red)

D (red)

Hang down your head Tom Doo - ley

D (red)

G (blue)

Poor boy you're bound to die.

Let's Play Clementine – A two-chord song

About the Song—The lyrics of this song are those of a bereaved lover singing about his darling, the daughter of a miner in the 1849 California Gold Rush. He loses her in a drowning accident, though he consoles himself towards the end of the song with Clementine's "little sister".

Required Chords—This song uses the G chord (blue button) and the D Chord (red button).

Strum—Notice that the strum marks for this song are played in groups of three. Practice strumming and changing the chords as indicated (without singing).

Sing & Strum *Clementine* and change chords as indicated. You may chose to say the words, sing them or anything in between. Read the story of the song and imagine yourself as a California gold miner in the 1890's sitting by a river and singing this song.

Clementine

2-Chord Song

/ = Louder Strum

/ = Softer Strum

Guitar

Oh, my Dar - lin', Oh, my dar - lin', Oh, my

dar - - - lin' Clem - en - tine, You are lost and gone for-

ev - er dread - ful sor - ry Clem - en - tine.

Additional Lyrics

2. Light she was and like a fairy, and her shoes were number nine
Wearing boxes without topses, sandals were for Clementine.
3. Drove she ducklings to the water, every morning just at nine
Hit her foot against a splinter, Fell into the foaming brine.
4. Ruby lips above the water blowing bubbles soft and fine;
Alas for me! I was no swimmer. So I lost my Clementine.

Up to this point, you have learned to play two songs using the basic strum – great for learning the basics, but a little too vanilla. Now let's take you to the next level with the *pick strum*.

Let's Learn the Pick Strum

Just like the name implies, the *pick strum* is as simple as removing a strum in a measure and picking a bass note, called the *root*. This simple change, though, can add depth to a song and give it that special feel.

For a song in 3/4-time, the first strum in a measure is replaced by a bass note pick. For a song in 4/4-time, the first and third strums in a measure are replaced by a picked root note of the chord. The following table illustrates the simplicity of the *pick strum* in 3/4 and 4/4 time:

	3/4 –time					4/4-time				
Basic strum	:	/	/	/	:	:	/	/	/	/ :
Pick strum	:	P	/	/	:	:	P	/	P	/ :

The only thing left to learn about the pick strum is which bass note to pick and which strings to strum.

G and E-minor chords	=	Pick sixth string Strum bottom five strings
C chord	=	Pick fifth string Strum bottom four strings
D chord	=	Pick fourth string Strum bottom three strings

Now, practice the *pick strum* for each chord until you can do it without mistake and without having to think about it.

Let's Play On Top of Old Smokey – A three-chord song

About the Song—*On Top of Old Smokey* is a traditional folk song that rose to the top of the record chart in The Weavers 1951 recording. While there have been many parodies written for this song, the most popular is *On Top of Spaghetti*.

Required Chords—This song uses the G chord (blue button), the C chord (green button) and the D Chord (red button).

Strum—Notice that the strum marks for this song are played in groups of three. Practice strumming, using the pick strum pattern, and changing chords as indicated (without singing). This song is in 3/4 time.

Sing & Strum *On Top of Old Smokey* and change chords as indicated.

On Top of Old Smokey

3-Chord Song

Guitar

On top of old Smokey all covered with snow, I lost my true lover - - - - - er come a - court - ing too slow.

Additional Lyrics

2. On top of old Smoky, I went there to weep,
For a false-hearted lover, Is worse than a thief.
3. A thief he will rob you of all that you have,
But a false-hearted lover, will send you to your grave.
4. He'll hug you and kiss you and tell you more lies,
Tan the cross-ties on the railroad, or the stars in the skies.